

California Biodiversity Council Watershed Work Group

Best Funding Practices for Watershed Management

Summary of Issues and Recommendations

1.) Streamline the Application and Project Selection Process

- Within 5 years, develop a common pre-proposal to be used by major funding programs.
- Incorporate common requirements for monitoring, evaluation, and database entry into Requests for Proposals and other funding documents.
- Each separate funding program should develop a checklist to assist applicants in targeting appropriate sources of funding.
- Coordinate funding schedules and cycles to be mindful of matching opportunities.

2.) Administer Funds More Efficiently

- Agencies should examine internal procedures to release funds in a more timely manner and/or to provide up front costs where possible.
- Assist applicants in planning timing of grant to correspond to limited field season.
- Provide sufficient but not excessive administrative and management support for grants.
- Assist recipients in developing good project management and administrative skills. Encourage small applicants to pool administrative resources.

3.) Improve Reporting and Accountability

- Develop a common statewide project database using NRPI as a model.
- Develop common standard performance measures for watershed projects.

4.) Provide Technical Assistance and Outreach

- Host collaborative, regional workshops to explain programs.
- Provide inter-agency collaborative technical training to encourage high quality projects.
- Increase the number of agency field staff available to assist with watershed programs.

5.) Address Regional and Economic Differences

- Ensure that there is sufficient staff to assist in all regions of the state.
- Include local and/or regional review as a primary step in making funding decisions.

6.) Ensure Funding Decisions are Based on Sound Science

- Require technical review of applications. Ensure that there is no conflict of interest.

7.) Leverage Multiple Funding Sources

- Leverage private funds through public-private partnerships.

8.) Educate Policy Makers

- Produce an inter-agency succinct public relations document highlighting watershed concepts and success stories.
- Conduct public forums and meetings targeting policy makers.
- Each program should document successful case studies.

9.) Fill Funding Gaps

- Seek additional funds for identified gaps including funds for watershed coordinators, project monitoring, and watershed planning.